THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Domestic air transport policy adopted in January, 1997 does not permit equity from foreign airlins, directly or indirectly, in the domestic sector.

(c) and (d) Presently no foreign airline has expressed its interest to subscribe equity in the domestic sector.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. The Government had in January, 2000 approved the proposal for restructuring the airports of the Airports Authority of India as and when found suitable through long term lease. At the first instance the airports located at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata have been taken up for privatization through the route of long-term lease.

(g) The draft Civil Aviation Policy under finalisation, *inter-alia*, provide for to setting up a regulatory authority and creation of a Civil Aviation Development Fund.

Infusion of funds in AI

473. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to infuse more funds into Air India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor keeping in view its impending disinvestment; and

(c) the fresh steps taken by Government to make Air India a profit making public undertaking?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAY HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Planning Commission

has agreed in principle to contribute to the equity of Air India. The present adverse debt equity ratio and the need to acquire new aircrafts are the reasons.

(c) Air India has taken various steps to make them viable which includes:- (i) withdrawing of capacity from inherently loss making routes and redeploying it on more profitable routes; (ii) maximising the utilisation of the fleet within the constraints of pilot availability; (iii) dry leasing of aircraft to augment capacity; (iv) Improvement in inflight service; (v) introduction of e-marketing effective January 2002 yo enable passengers to make on-line bookings through the net; (vi) reduction in staff strength in India and abroad; (vii) abolition of several posts of India based officers abroad in the various departments and (viii) Introduction of new attractive schemes to improve seat load factor.

Increase of time difference

474. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to less time gap between Jet Airways and Indian Airlines flights from Bhubaneswar to Delhi, increasing the flight frequency from State Capital to the National Capital has become meaningless for the people of Orissa;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to increase the time gap between the aforesaid two flights; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (c) Flight timings on a particular route are decided by the